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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/773,347	02/09/2004	Shigeru Tago	HIRA,0139	7027

7590 12/22/2006
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EXAMINER

MAHMOOD, REZWANUL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2164

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	12/22/2006	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/773,347	Applicant(s) TAGO ET AL.	
	Examiner Rezwanul Mahmood	Art Unit 2164	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>09222006</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to the amendment filed on September 22, 2006.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 5-8 are objected to because of the following informalities:
3. In claim 5 line 10, "Sequent" should be "sequent".
4. In claim 6 lines 6 and 7, "module of" should be "module for".
5. In claim 7 line 2, "module of" should be "module for".
6. In claim 8 line 2, "module of" should be "module for".
7. Appropriate correction is required.

Response to Amendment

8. Claims 1-8 are pending in this office action.
9. In view of the amendment filed on 09/22/2006, the objections to the drawings have been withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-8 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over PCT publication WO 02/33571 A2 (hereinafter "David") in view of Farrington (US Publication 2004/0059755).

13. With respect to claim 1, David discloses a method of outputting a database search information in a database system for retrieving records using a search key and retrieving records from a plurality of databases in a chain-reactive manner (David: Page 1, lines 22-23; Page 2, lines 1-9), the method comprising:

a step of retrieving a record by entering an initial search key into an initial database (David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21);

a step of retrieving a subsequent record by entering a subsequent search key, which is contained in the retrieved record and different from the initial search key, into a subsequent database different from the initial database in a chain-reactive manner from the initial database via a plurality of sequent databases to provide subsequently received records as search results (David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21; Page 6, lines 20-27; Page 7, lines 5-7 and 19-26; Page 8, lines 1-8);

David does not explicitly teach a step of outputting, in the case that a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first

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subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record.

However, Farrington discloses identifying segments and fields that are associated with a valid path and viewing the invalid paths (Farrington: Paragraph 10, lines 9-20; Figures 1-2J).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of David and Farrington to have identified records that have an invalid path to subsequent records in a database system for the benefit of providing an easy to use graphical user interface for displaying, navigating, and selecting segments and fields of a hierarchical database or data files and for identifying mutual exclusivity between the segments and fields (Farrington: Paragraph 10, lines 4-9)

14. With respect to claim 2, David in view of Farrington discloses the method of outputting a database search information according to claim 1, in the case that the first subsequent record that does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database is present among records retrieved from any intervening database other than the initial database and a pre-designated terminal database, the method further comprising:

a step of outputting the contents of the first subsequent record at the same time with said step of outputting information or in accordance with a specific operation (Farrington: Paragraph 46, lines 1-30; Figures 1-2J; David: Figures 1-4).

15. With respect to claim 3, David in view of Farrington discloses the method of outputting a database search information according to claim 1, wherein in the step of retrieving subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of retrieval processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes (Farrington: Figures 2A-2J; David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21; Page 6, lines 20-27; Page 7, lines 5-7 and 19-26; Page 8, lines 1-8; Figures 1-4).

16. With respect to claim 4, David in view of Farrington discloses the method of outputting a database search information according to claim 2, wherein in the step of retrieving subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of extraction processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix from using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes (Farrington: Figures 2A-2J; David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21; Page 6, lines 20-27; Page 7, lines 5-7 and 19-26; Page 8, lines 1-8; Figures 1-4).

17. With respect to claim 5, David in view of Farrington discloses a program for causing a computer to carry out a method of outputting a database search information in a database system for retrieving records using a search key and retrieving records

from a plurality of databases in a chain-reactive manner, comprising:

a module for retrieving a record by entering an initial search key into an initial database (David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21);

a module for retrieving a subsequent record by entering a subsequent search key, which is contained in the retrieved record and different from the initial search key, into a subsequent database different from the initial database in a chain-reactive manner from the initial database via plurality of sequent databases to provide subsequently retrieved records as search results (David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21; Page 6, lines 20-27; Page 7, lines 5-7 and 19-26; Page 8, lines 1-8);

a module for outputting, in the case that in a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record (Farrington: Paragraph 10, lines 9-20; Paragraph 46, lines 1-30; Figures 1-2J).

18. With respect to claim 6, David in view of Farrington discloses the program according to claim 5, in the case that the first subsequent record that does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database is present among records retrieved from any intervening database other than the initial database and a pre-designated terminal database, the program further comprising:

a module form outputting the contents of the first subsequent record at the same time with said module for outputting information or in accordance with a specific operation (Farrington: Paragraph 46, lines 1-30; Figures 1-2J).

19. With respect to claim 7, David in view of Farrington discloses the program according to claim 5, wherein in the module for retrieving subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of retrieval processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes (Farrington: Figures 2A-2J; David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21; Page 6, lines 20-27; Page 7, lines 5-7 and 19-26; Page 8, lines 1-8).

20. With respect to claim 8, David in view of Farrington discloses the program according to claim 6, wherein in the module for retrieving subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of retrieval processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes (Farrington: Figures 2A-2J; David: Page 4, lines 16-25; Page 5, lines 11-21; Page 6, lines 20-27; Page 7, lines 5-7 and 19-26; Page 8, lines 1-8).

Conclusion

21. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in

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this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rezwanul Mahmood whose telephone number is (571)272-5625. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F 10 A.M. - 5 P.M..

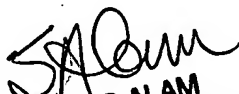
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on (571)272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Rezwanul Mahmood
Examiner
Art Unit 2164

December 8, 2006



SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER